Note verbale dated 6 May 1977 from the Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and, with reference to His Excellency's note Sub.No.OR 421/6(3) dated 28 January 1977 has the honour to communicate to him the views of the Greek Government on the agenda and all other relevant questions related to the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

Views of the Greek Government on the agenda and all other relevant questions related to the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament

1. The Government of Greece shares the major concern at the effects of the growing arms race which puts at stake international peace and security and hinders the economic growth of countries and more particularly of the developing ones. It has, therefore, encouraged all initiatives in the field of a complete and general disarmament and arms control. It was in this spirit that Greece voted for General Assembly resolutions concerning the convening of a world conference on disarmament. In the same spirit Greece supported the holding of the special session of the General Assembly. The Greek Government believes that the special session should be guided by the aims of establishing a complete and general disarmament under effective international control and promoting the well-being of peoples throughout the world.

As a first priority, the special session should not lose sight of the fact that the problem of general and complete disarmament is so closely interlinked with that of international peace and security that none of them can be looked upon separately. In this regard, the special session should look into ways for the observance of the principles enunciated by the United Nations Charter, for the implementation of the resolutions adopted by the principal organs of the United Nations and for the respect of the norms of international law, which rules the relations among States.
2. The observance of the provisions of the United Nations Charter and the implementation of United Nations resolutions constitute one of the necessary pre-conditions for the establishment of a system of arms control and ultimately of disarmament in a framework of international security that will contribute to the enhancement of world détente and the application of the principles of a new economic order.

3. Moreover, as it is the first time that the international community is presented with a universal forum for the consideration of problems related to disarmament and arms control, it is necessary that the special session grasps this unique opportunity and spares no effort for the substantive discussion of all the matters concerned and for the adoption of measures leading to general and complete disarmament within the framework of a system of security.

4. It is, therefore, the firm conviction of the Government of Greece that the matters concerned should be looked upon in a pragmatic and constructive way, while a spirit of co-operation should prevail in the works of the special session. The attention of the delegations should be focused on the practical approach of the items of the agenda and on the avoidance of dwelling upon detailed doctrinal discussions which may frustrate the important tasks of the special session. In this regard, the Government of Greece expresses the wish that efforts should be made in order that resolutions and other decisions be adopted by consensus so as to avoid, as far as possible, resorting to voting.

5. The special session should proceed to a thorough assessment of efforts so far deployed and a careful appraisal of results attained in the field of disarmament and arms control. In addition, it should look into the causes of the existing situation of stagnation regarding disarmament negotiations and draw the necessary conclusions. This appraisal will help identify the proper measures to be adopted.

6. Greece believes that the contribution of all States, irrespectively of their size, political power and economic development, is indispensable for the achievement of complete and general disarmament in a system of peace and security. Nevertheless, the preponderant role that the nuclear powers play in this field should not be disregarded. It is, therefore, necessary to assure the participation of these States in the decision-making process of the special session and especially in the adoption of measures concerning the non-proliferation of nuclear arms, the gradual nuclear and conventional disarmament, the reductions of military expenditures and budgets etc.

Special attention should be directed to the non-proliferation of nuclear armaments and adequate guarantee should be given to the non-nuclear States. Further adequate arrangements should be made so as not to deny, or put into a disadvantageous position the non-nuclear States, as regards peaceful uses of nuclear power. The special session, therefore, should examine the establishment of mechanisms for the peaceful use of nuclear power.

7. While the existing machineries dealing with the disarmament matters, such as the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, should be preserved in order...
not to prejudice activities already undertaken or to be assumed in the field of disarmament, the special session should look into the institutional aspects of the relationship between the General Assembly and the CCD in the field of disarmament. The special session may examine the procedural system of the CCD and suggest specific improvements. Furthermore, it would be advisable that an organic link be established between the CCD and the United Nations in the sense that mutual co-operation and exchange of information between the CCD and the competent organs of the United Nations be inaugurated.

8. The special session should pursue to adopt a declaration of principles setting the foundation on which negotiations, bilateral or multilateral, leading to a general and complete disarmament, could be conducted. This declaration should include, inter alia, the following:

(a) Respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and implementation of the resolutions adopted by its principal organs;

(b) Disarmament and arms control in a system of security is an integral part of a new international order based on national independence and international co-operation;

(c) Urgent priority must be given to nuclear as well as conventional disarmament. The transfer of conventional armaments should be examined in the light both of its effects on international security as well as of its repercussions on the economy of various countries;

(d) Portion of the savings derived from the reduction of military expenditures should be devoted to promoting the economic and social development, particularly in the developing countries.

9. The special session of the General Assembly must draw up a programme of action indicating measures to be taken to the effect of a general and complete disarmament. Some of the measures to be included therein may be the following:

(a) Measures for the implementation of the United Nations Charter and the respect of the resolutions of the United Nations principal organs and obligations derived from international conventions;

(b) Measures to halt nuclear and conventional arms race. The problem of halting the nuclear tests should be examined by all concerned in a new spirit;

(c) Measures regarding general disarmament under effective international control;

(d) Measures regarding regional disarmament;

(e) Measures prohibiting the use of weapons of mass destruction, of napalm and other incendiary weapons, chemical and biochemical weapons, etc.
10. In connexion with the agenda to be followed at the works of the special session, the Greek Government is of the view that the following items, at minimum, must be enlisted:

   (a) Review and appraisal of the present situation in the field of disarmament;
   (b) Adoption of a declaration of principles on disarmament;
   (c) Adoption of a programme of action on disarmament;
   (d) Review of the role of the United Nations in disarmament and examination of the existing institutional and other mechanisms in this field.